United Nations S/PV.7819

Security Council

Seventy-first year

Provisional

7819th meeting

Wednesday, 23 November 2016, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Seck	(Senegal)
Members:	Angola	Mr. Gaspar Martins
	China	Mr. Shen Bo
	Egypt	Mr. Aboulatta
	France	Mr. Delattre
	Japan	Mr. Bessho
	Malaysia	Mr. Ibrahim
	New Zealand	Mr. Taula
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Spain	Mr. González de Linares Palou
	Ukraine	Mr. Vitrenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Rycroft
	United States of America	Ms. Sison
	Uruguay	Mr. Rosselli
	Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Mr. Suárez Moreno

Agenda

Security Council mission

Briefing by Security Council mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Angola (10 to 14 November 2016)

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16-39993 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Security Council mission

Briefing by Security Council mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Angola (10 to 14 November 2016)

The President (*spoke in French*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by the Permanent Representatives of the two countries that co-led the Security Council mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Angola, namely, France and Angola.

I now give the floor to the Permanent Representative of France to make a statement on the Security Council's mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Mr. Delattre (France) (*spoke in French*): First and foremost, allow me to warmly thank the Secretariat, in particular the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), for having made possible the Security Council's mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Angola from 11 to 14 November. I would also like to thank the Senegalese presidency. We would like to continue working with the Secretariat to learn all that we can from that important mission. I also sincerely thank Angola for the solid partnership we forged as we travelled from Kinshasa to Beni and then to Luanda. I will focus my remarks on our visit to the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The Security Council visited that country in order to have discussions with national stakeholders about the country's current political situation, given the recent unrest caused by the delay in the electoral process, as well as about the security challenges related, in particular to protecting civilians and combating armed groups in the east of the country. As I mentioned, the Council visited Kinshasa and Beni, in North Kivu. In Kinshasa, the Security Council met with a wide range of actors. In particular, the Council met with the President, the Prime Minister, representatives of the presidential majority, the opposition that signed the 18 October agreement and those that did not sign it. We were also able to meet with the National Conference of Catholic Bishops (CENCO), representatives of human rights organizations, youth associations and women's associations. We also had a very useful exchange with the leadership of MONUSCO. In Beni, the Council was able to meet with the different representatives of MONUSCO, the Governors of North and South Kivu as well as the Mayor of Beni and the commanders of the Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo. The Council also met with representatives of local populations who were victims of the recent atrocities.

To try to draw with the main lessons of the mission, the mission made it possible for the Security Council to convey two messages. The first message was that the Democratic Republic of the Congo is at a turning point in its history: for the first time, a peaceful transition of power following President Kabila's term is possible. This in itself is reason for hope, but to achieve it all the political forces of the country will need to unite in order to respond to the wishes of the Congolese people. Dialogue remains the best possible way to overcome the differences that remain. The second message that we were able to convey was that holding free, fair, credible, open, transparent and peaceful elections as soon as possible, in accordance with the Congolese Constitution, is something that everyone is expecting. It is now up to all political forces to ensure that the country remains on the path of peace and of strengthening its democratic institutions.

In response to those messages, which were delivered in a very united way by all members of the Security Council, all the Council's interlocutors expressed their wish to avoid a new episode of violence after the tragic events of 19 and 20 September 2016. They assured us of their readiness to continue discussions following the 18 October agreement in a more sweeping and inclusive framework to reach a clear and precise road map based on a broad consensus that would make it possible to achieve a transition within a specific timetable.

The Security Council clearly encouraged all actors to continue these discussions so that the electoral process could take place in a peaceful climate and in a spirit of consensus that brings together all the political forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The Council also encouraged the parties to take the necessary confidence-building measures, such as the suspension of judicial proceedings undertaken for political ends, freeing political prisoners, a clear commitment by everyone to respecting the Constitution, and the

opening of the political space to allow for discussions to be held in peaceful conditions and come to a quick and positive conclusion.

The Council also called for this process to be accompanied by a free and constructive political debate, where freedom of opinion, assembly and fair access to the media are guaranteed and where security and freedom of movement are also ensured. The Security Council called on the Congolese authorities to restore the broadcast signal of Radio France Internationale and to lift the ban on demonstrations. It also called on the opposition forces, for their part, to act responsibly and ensure that their demonstrations would be peaceful.

That is the overall message that together the 15 members of the Council transmitted to all the political actors that we met. Compromises will be necessary on both sides, and we hope that the spirit of responsibility in the political leaders will prevail. The mediation currently being carried out by CENCO deserves our support. It has the potential to bring the parties to the compromise necessary for the Democratic Republic of the Congo to experience a peaceful transition after 19 December.

The Council remains aware of the situation of the civilian populations in the east of the country. Everything must be done to protect them. This was also an essential component of our visit. The Security Council visited Beni for the first time in order to express its solidarity with the victims of the recent violence. We attached particular interest to making this point. The atrocities committed in the region over the past two years are a challenge for all of us, for human dignity, for peace and stability in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in the region as a whole.

In eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, there will be no lasting security as long as illegal armed groups continue to operate in the region. The Council was able to see that this is a problem that requires a comprehensive response: it will have a military aspect, thanks to MONUSCO and to the Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo, which are fighting on the ground, as well as political and legal aspects, in the form of combating illegal trafficking in natural resources and shutting down the predatory networks that enable these groups to survive and of prosecuting perpetrators of atrocities. Collaboration among the countries of the region is essential to achieve those objectives.

In that context, the Council expressed its strong support for MONUSCO, which had been targeted on 8 November by an unprecedented attack. We also heard the message of representatives of civil society in Beni, which called for the Mission to be more effective. It must indeed adapt to the new challenges and show greater robustness and flexibility in order to be as effective as possible. This was the subject of the Council's discussions with the commanders of MONUSCO, and we will pursue this task in coordination with the Secretariat. The Security Council has great confidence in MONUSCO, which can count on the Council's support in this phase where it must adapt to new challenges.

Those are some of the main conclusions and lessons learned that I wanted to call to your attention, Mr. President.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the Permanent Representative of Angola to make a statement on the visit of the Security Council to Angola.

Mr. Gaspar Martins (Angola): I would like to start by joining my colleague, the Permanent Representative of France, Mr. François Delattre, in thanking, first, the presidency of the Security Council and, next, all colleagues who joined us in the mission to both the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Angola.

I am very honoured to report to the Council on the outcome of the Angolan segment of the Security Council mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Angola on 13 and 14 November. The mission exchanged views with the authorities of Angola, which currently chairs the International Conference of the Great Lakes Region, on ways to prevent the aggravation of the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The mission was therefore essentially a mission that, I think we agreed, was intended to be of a preventive character.

The first meeting was with the First Vice-President, Mrs. Joana Lina Ramos, who is in charge of the National Assembly of Angola, and members of the Commission for External Relations and the National Security Commission. The Deputy Permanent Representative of France, Mr. Alexis Lamek, and I, as leaders of the mission, outlined the mission's objective, namely, to discuss with Angolan authorities measures to ensure a serious commitment by the main political actors in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, to overcome the political impasse, to help restore confidence among the political players and to create conditions for an inclusive

dialogue leading the country to the holding of fair, democratic and transparent elections and permitting the peaceful transfer of power. The Council again urged the authorities of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to respect the Constitution and the rule of law in the country and encouraged them to pursue stabilization and pacification through an inclusive and democratic dialogue favouring the holding of free, transparent and credible elections in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The Vice-President of the Angolan Parliament highlighted that the Angolan authorities are aware of and concerned about the crisis in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, with all of its potential negative impact on Angola and the rest of the region. They are therefore advocating an inclusive dialogue in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, citing Angola as an example — a country that was torn apart by nearly 30 years of armed conflict that took thousands of lives, but was nevertheless able to reach peace and national reconciliation primarily through dialogue.

The mission met then with the Vice-President of the Republic of Angola, Mr. Manuel Vicente, accompanied by the Minister of State and Chief of Security, Mr. Vieira Dias, Junior., the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Georges Chikoti, and Secretary for Diplomatic Affairs of the President, Mr. Carlos Fonseca. During the meeting, the Security Council mission argued for the need to prevent the Democratic Republic of the Congo from plunging into chaos and violence, a situation that could affect all neighbouring countries and the region as a whole. The Vice-President of Angola assured the Security Council mission that Angola was monitoring the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo with great attention and concern, stressing that the Angolan Government had expressed its position on the situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo in a statement that was issued two days before the arrival of the Council mission to Luanda, and that declaration, which was shared with the members of the Council, reaffirming Angola's policy of non-interference in the internal affairs of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and stressing that peace and stability in that country must be preserved, as it is crucial for regional peace and security, especially for Central Africa.

Angola's declaration further expressed the conviction that the political dispute must be resolved through dialogue and not through violence or any other illegitimate means, and called on the parties to maintain the dialogue and negotiations, and to avoid confrontation and violence at all costs. The Vice-President assured the mission that Angola, in its capacity as President of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, as well as a neighbouring country and friend of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, will remain available to work with the international community, in particular with the Security Council, for the stabilization of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

In our final meeting with the diplomatic corps accredited to Angola, the mission reaffirmed the need for consensus on an electoral calendar and confidence-building measures by the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the importance of a peaceful transition from the Government of President Kabila, after the holding of transparent, democratic and fair elections.

In conclusion, the Council mission and its Angolan interlocutors agreed to make efforts to help the Democratic Republic of the Congo to get through the difficult period that the country is going through and to do their utmost to promote a fruitful political dialogue, respect the rule of law and establish a credible electoral calendar — all in the interests of peace and stability in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in the Central African region. Also, I would mention the shared idea that the Council is the primary instrument to help the region, and particularly the countries of the Great Lakes region, bring about peace and stability in the Democratic Republic of the Congo with a common vision, shared between the Council and the countries of the region, specifically Angola.

The President (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the Security Council, I thank all members of the Council and the Secretariat who participated in the mission for the outstanding manner in which they discharged the important responsibilities conferred upon them.

The meeting rose at 10.25 a.m.